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ARTICLES:

(1) DPJ eyes building equal Japan-U.S. alliance; Ways to achieve it are unclear

YOMIURI (Page 3) (Abridged)
August 27, 2009

Hiroaki Matsunaga, Toshimitsu Miyai, political news department

The alliance with the United States has been the foundation of Japan's foreign policy throughout the postwar period. The manifesto produced by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) for the upcoming House of Representatives election reveals a plan to build an equal

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relationship with the United States. The major opposition party appears to be set to review the existing Japan-U.S. relationship.

Concrete picture of an equal relationship

"Until now, Japan's diplomacy has been based on suiting the convenience of the U.S. We must now build an equal relationship in which we can strongly assert our wishes." This is an explanation of the DPJ's goal of an equal Japan-U.S. alliance, offered by President Yukio Hatoyama during a television program on Aug. 23.

The DPJ manifesto says that the party will aim at building an equal Japan-U.S. alliance and Japan will fulfill its responsibilities by sharing roles with the United States. But specifically how Japan will fulfill its responsibilities remains unclear. This is because former Japan Socialist Party members are included in its ranks, so the party has not been able to come up with unified foreign and security policies.

Strong influence of Ozawa's policy imprint

Under such circumstances, the thinking of Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa, who still wields significant influence in the party, particularly stands out.

"The U.S. 7th Fleet is sufficient in terms of American presence in the Far East," Ozawa said in February this year, shortly after the Obama administration was launched, stunning the U.S. government.

There are some 47,000 U.S. troops in Japan. Ozawa thinks Japan should attach greater importance to the authority of the United Nations than to that of the U.S. military. Ozawa is an advocate of a standby force for UN peacekeeping missions, as a separate organization from the Self-Defense Forces.

He has been keeping a low profile since resigning as DPJ president in May. In late July, the DPJ's liberal and conservative mid-level members jointly produced a policy report evidently reflecting Ozawa's views. It was presented to President Hatoyama.

The report says that Japan must use strategic thinking to achieve peace rather than war, while underscoring the need to break away from its old nature and thinking that rely too heavily on the United States. It also calls for the establishment of what is temporarily

called an international emergency police force that is allowed to use weapons - an idea carrying an Ozawa stamp. The report also urges Tokyo to drastically review the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement, while advocating a policy of completely abolishing Japan's host-nation support for the costs of stationing U.S. forces in Japan as a "relic of the previous era."

Diversified views on security

Hatoyama once said, "I have no intention of following the idea of doing whatever the United Nations has decided." He is an advocate of "fraternal diplomacy," which means indiscriminately associating even with countries with different values. Given the high likelihood that it will take the helm of government, the DPJ has acknowledged the importance of continuity of foreign and security policies. However, the party's stance on the alliance (with the United States) remains vague.

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At the same time, Vice President Seiji Maehara and many other DPJ executives attach importance to relations with the United States.

"There is a strong likelihood that the DPJ will keep a distance from with the United States and aim at "omni-directional diplomacy," predicted Takashi Kawakami, a professor of security issues at Takushoku University.

SDP's influence

Even if the DPJ wins the Lower House election, the party still does not hold a majority in the House of Councillors. As a result, the DPJ intends to form a coalition with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and other opposition parties. The coalition with the SDP, which advocates the protection of the Constitution and peace, might affect the DPJ's foreign and security policies as well.

Hatoyama has already flip-flopped on the handling of the three non-nuclear principles, of which the SDP is calling for legislation. Initially Hatoyama had been dismissive of the legislation of the three principles. But on Aug. 9, he indicated that the DPJ would consider (legislation) in compliance with the SDP's call.

DPJ manifesto

The conclusion of a purported secret Japan-U.S. pact allowing U.S. warships to introduce nuclear weapons into Japan is one of the points at issue in the ongoing election campaigning.

DPJ Secretary General Katsuya Okada indicated that if his party takes power and discovers the documents, a DPJ administration will disclose all the documents. Going a step further, President Hatoyama announced that of the three principles, he will press President Obama to clarify the principle of not permitting the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan.

The government and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) have consistently indicated that the secret agreement does not exist. But at a press conference on Aug. 24, Vice-Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka admitted the fact that Japan held talks with the United States on the introduction of nuclear weapons, while indicating that there might have been a difference in interpretations of that concept between the two countries. (The Foreign Ministry) has begun seeking a common ground on the matter in anticipation of the establishment of a DPJ administration.

The secret pact is believed to have been a desperate measure for Japan, a country pursuing the elimination of nuclear weapons, to maintain the United States' "nuclear umbrella" in dealing with the threat from the Soviet Union during the Cold War. What is (the DPJ's) view on the United States' nuclear deterrence in the face of China's nuclear buildup and North Korea's nuclear development? The party's vagueness about the secret agreement is directly linked to the foundation of Japan's security policy.

There is no mention of nuclear deterrence in the DPJ manifesto,

although it plays up its plan to pursue nuclear disarmament.

(2) Editorial: 2009 Lower House election 2009 - Ways to build Japan-U.S.-China relations must be discussed

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 5) (Full)

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August 27, 2009

It goes without saying that Japan's relationship with the United States is important. Therefore, Japan should discuss with the U.S. about how the two nations should deal with China, which is experiencing rapid economic growth. Building a balanced Japan-U.S.-China relationship will become a major challenge for the new Japanese government, as well.

Due to the effects of the Iraq war and the global financial crisis, there have also been significant changes in the foreign policy of the United States, on which Japan is reliant. U.S. President Barack Obama is advocating a world free of nuclear weapons and has begun to tackle the global warming issue.

The Obama administration has stepped up cooperation not only with its allies but also with developing countries on such immediate issues as economic reconstruction, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation.

China's economy is growing dramatically and will likely overtake Japan's before the end of the year. China is the largest importer to Japan, surpassing the United States.

However, a worrying factor is that China has boosted its defense spending over ten percent for 21 years in a row. Beijing has supported North Korea, which has brought about the abduction issue and nuclear and missile threats, in the form of providing the North with energy and food.

Regarding China, the two major Japanese parties only stipulate in their manifestos (sets of campaign pledges for the Aug. 30 House of Representatives election) that (the Liberal Democratic Party) will improve bilateral relations and that (the Democratic Party of Japan) will build relations of trust with China.

Although Washington wishes to strengthen ties with Beijing, it is wary of China's arms buildup. With an eye on the moves of not only North Korea but also China, the United States wants to enhance the Japan-U.S. alliance and implement the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan.

Since the LDP says that it will improve the reliability of the Japan-U.S. alliance and the DPJ says that it will build a close and equal Japan-U.S. alliance, they should also speak about their views of China. All the more because the DPJ aims to establish an East Asia Community, it must have its own policy toward China. Otherwise, the DPJ's idea is nothing more than talk.

The Obama administration initiated in late July a strategic and economic dialogue of cabinet-level officials with China. Washington's strategy is to convince Beijing to come over to its side regarding measures for economic reconstruction as well as measures to prevent global warming.

In the past, Japan had its own policy toward China that was different from the U.S.'s. It urged the West not to isolate China when the Tiananmen Square incident occurred (in 1989), supporting China's reform and door-opening policies. In order to have China join the World Trade Organization (WTO), Japan concluded negotiations with China prior to the U.S. and Europe.

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However, in recent years Japan has viewed China as a rival and conducted foreign policy in opposition to China.

Frustrations are spreading among Japanese people that their country will be overtaken by China. The reason for Japan's frustration is probably because it has yet to find ways to formulate diplomacy with which Japan assert its presence in between the U.S. and China.

Because of this, Japanese people offer applause for criticism of China. The new Japanese government is urged to devise diplomacy that prevents China from becoming a threat, taking China's rapid economic growth in stride and utilizing that vitality for its own economic revitalization.

(3) Editorial: Action needed to turn goal of world free of nuclear weapons into concrete arrangement

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
August 28, 2009

At the venue of the 21st UN Conference on Disarmament Issues in Niigata City, the sound of approaching nuclear-disarmament footsteps could be heard from a distance. A discussion was conducted on ways to turn visions of a world free of nuclear weapons into concrete actions.

Since the first disarmament conference was held in Kyoto in 1989 in the last days of the Cold War, it has been held in Japan every summer.

This year, the conference opened on Aug. 26 amid momentum for nuclear disarmament gearing up in the wake of U.S. President Barack Obama's speech in Prague in April. The meeting brought together about 80 people from about 20 countries, including government officials and experts.

On Sept. 24, President Obama will chair a summit meeting of 15 UN Security Council member countries in New York to discuss nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation issues. The new Japanese prime minister, who will be selected after the upcoming general election, will also attend the summit. On Sept. 24-25, the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) will be held in New York.

The International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, co-chaired by Japan and Australia, will next meet in Hiroshima in October and will present a roadmap for nuclear disarmament. An agreement is also expected to be reached on a treaty to be adopted after the expiration at the end of this year of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START1) concluded between the U.S. and Russia.

A summit meeting on nuclear security as advocated by Obama and a global nuclear disarmament conference to be sponsored by Japan are scheduled for March 2010.

These meetings will be arenas to give momentum to the international trend toward nuclear disarmament, with an eye toward the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference in May 2010. From the Japanese point of view, Niigata is the starting point for such efforts.

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At the Niigata conference, Kazakhstan State Secretary Kanat Saudabayev, who persuaded the former Soviet Union to abolish its nuclear weapons, delivered a keynote speech. Former foreign minister Yoriko Kawaguchi and former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans spelled out ways to promote nuclear disarmament for the mid-term until 2012 and for the long-term until 2025. The co-chairs included such tasks as persuading North Korea and Iran to suspend their nuclear development programs and putting the CTBT into effect in the category of short-term challenges.

The venue is not far from the site at which Megumi Yokota was abducted by North Korean agents. Niigata Governor Hirohiko Izumida said: "It is an unfortunate fact that the abduction issue will not move forward as long as North Korea's denuclearization process

remains stalled." In the Niigata conference, a perception gap between participants from Japan and China was evident on North Korea's denuclearization issue, making it difficult to resolve even short-term tasks.

It is necessary to take action in an effort to turn the goal of a world without nuclear weapons into a concrete arrangement. There seems to be no effective means to that end, but the Niigata Conference was significant in promoting the campaign to eliminate nuclear weapons.

(4) DPJ to launch transition team as early as Aug. 31: Key cabinet members to be nominated ahead of schedule

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Top Play) (Excerpts)
August 28, 2009

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has decided to launch a transition team responsible for effectively forming a cabinet, based on the premise that it will win the Lower House election on August 30. DPJ President Yukio Hatoyama, a prime ministerial candidate, will nominate candidates for key cabinet posts, including chief cabinet secretary, and senior party officials, such as deputy president, secretary general and Diet affairs committee chairman. As members of the transition team, these nominees will press ahead with adjustments for launching a new cabinet.

Cabinet member to preside over new administrative reform council

It has also been decided that a cabinet member will be assigned to head the new administrative reform council tasked with identifying wasteful spending of tax revenues.

The special Diet session, in which an election to nominate the prime minister after the Lower House election is to be held, will likely be convened in the week starting on September 14. The transition team headed by Hatoyama will finalize the line-up of a new cabinet and aim to form the cabinet by September 18. The team will also move forward with the selection of members of the national strategy bureau, which is responsible for drafting a budget outline and mid-to long-term foreign policy and security strategy, and members of the new administrative reform council.

Prior to the establishment of the transition team, Hatoyama will pick new party executives, after securing a free hand for the selection of personnel for the new administration from the present party executives. At the same time, he intends to informally appoint key cabinet members, such as chief cabinet secretary, finance

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minister, and foreign minister, and staffers of the Kantei, including deputy chief cabinet secretary.

The DPJ policy research council chairman will double as a minister in charge of the national strategy bureau. The membership of the bureau will likely consist of lawmakers, experts from the private sector, party staffers, and bureaucrats, as well as the minister responsible for the bureau, totaling 30. The administration will tentatively set up the bureau by amending the relevant government ordinance at its first cabinet meeting. It will give the bureau a legal status by enacting an establishment law at the extraordinary Diet session, which is expected to be convened in October.

The first issue the bureau will face is to create frameworks for the second extra budget draft for the recompilation of the already approved fiscal 2009 extra budget and the fiscal 2010 budget.

Concurrently with the work by the transition team, the DPJ will also press ahead with coalition talks mainly involving the secretaries general of the Social Democratic Party and the People's New Party.

(5) If LDP loses Lower House election, LDP factions will collapse

SHUKAN BUNSHUN (Page 50) (Full)
September 3, 2009

What will happen to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) if it suffers a crushing defeat in the Aug. 30 House of Representatives election? There is a pessimistic view. "If the LDP falls into a mid-size political party of several dozen Lower House members," says a former cabinet member, "it will eventually have to be dissolved." What will first happen after the Lower House election is the collapse of the LDP's faction system, which has existed more than 50 years in reality and in name.

According to opinion polls by media outlets, heads of five of the eight factions could lose the election. What will the five factions do in a party leadership race to elect a successor to Taro Aso, which the LDP must do soon after the general election?

Because the Machimura, former Tsushima, and Koga factions count respectively 27, 20, and 9 House of Councillor parliamentarians as members, these three major factions will survive. Since most of these Upper House members will face an election next summer, they have to bond together. The factions will exist, but members have different motives.

In the Machimura faction, even if its head, former Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura is elected, former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will strengthen his influence over it. It is ironical that the person once regarded as the cause of a major defeat for the LDP will use an election setback as a springboard to boost his influence. However, a senior faction member said, "Since a group led by former Secretary General Hidenao Nakagawa will not be obedient to Abe, there are (only) a small number of members whom Abe can control." So it will be difficult for Abe to replace Machimura.

In the former Shimazu faction, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry Shigeru Ishiba, who is now very popular, is expected to run in the upcoming LDP presidential race as he did so when the party held the presidential election to choose the replacement of then Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda. However, since he is not on good terms

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with Mikio Aoki, who actually controls the LDP Upper House, it is certain that the faction will split.

As for the Koga faction, "A new leader is unlikely to emerge because Chairman Makoto Koga will control the faction behind the scenes even if he loses the election," says one of its senior members."

In the Yamasaki faction, the fourth largest, it is certain Senior Deputy Secretary General Nobuteru Ishihara will file his candidacy in the presidential election. However, if State Minister for Administrative Reform Akira Amari wins the general election, the faction will split into two groups.

In the Ibuki faction, the fifth largest, there is a possibility that Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura will be top in years of service. "(But) he won't be able to manage the faction," says one of its senior members. "He's a caretaker (rather than a leader.)"

Therefore, there are many openings in the LDP. Former Internal Affairs and Communication Minister Kunio Hatoyama would like to fill one. He hinted he might withdraw from the LDP, but he is eager to become its savior. If he becomes LDP president, the Hatoyama brothers will hold the presidential posts of two major parties

(6) Post-election special Diet session likely to be held on Sept. 14 at the earliest; LDP to elect new president, preparing to go into opposition

ASAHI (Page 4) (Excerpts)
August 28, 2009

Amid predictions that the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) will win a landslide victory in the general election, the government and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) have already begun drawing up a political schedule factoring in a change of administration. If the party loses the general election, the most likely scenario is that it will hold an election to choose a new president and coordinate with the DPJ on holding the special Diet session, which will elect

the new prime minister some time between September 14 and 18.

The Constitution stipulates that the special Diet session will have to be convened not later than 30 days after the general election. After the speaker and vice speaker of the House of Representatives are named, the election of the prime minister will be held. Although incumbent Prime Minister Taro Aso can decide when to hold this Diet session, details are decided by a conference of Lower House floor groups consisting of representatives of ruling and opposition parties after the election, which will be held on September 4 at the earliest. This meeting will also decide the assignment of offices in the Diet building.

There has been talk in the LDP about delaying the special Diet session to late September if it loses the election, in order to delay the inauguration of the new administration. However, DPJ President Yukio Hatoyama appears to be keen on delivering a speech at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and attending the G-20 financial summit in late September after taking over the administration. Many LDP members now believe that if the DPJ wins a landslide victory, convening the Diet before the UNGA will be inevitable.

Aso's term as LDP president expires by the end of September. If the LDP loses the election, the party will elect a new president before

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going into the special Diet session. About two weeks' time is needed to hold a presidential election with voting by party members from the regional chapters. Even for this reason alone, convening the special Diet session during the week of September 14 would be appropriate.

In reality, many senior LDP officials are out on the hustings and unable to focus on managing the party or the Diet after the general election. An Asahi Shimbun survey shows that while Secretary General Hiroyuki Hosoda is leading somewhat in his constituency, Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Tadamori Oshima, who is responsible for setting the Diet schedule, is one step behind his DPJ opponent. Many senior officials of the Machimura, Tsushima, Ibuki, and Koga factions who exercise influence on party management are fighting an uphill battle in their home constituencies.

The LDP will manage the party and conduct Diet affairs with leaders who survive the election, but if it suffers a crushing defeat as predicted by many, one senior official may have to do several jobs simultaneously, and it is very likely that party management will undergo review to reflect the balance of power among the factions. However, the immediate issue will be whether the party can unite under a new president.

With the defeat of many powerful Diet members becoming a real possibility, there is growing panic in the LDP. There is no telling who will survive the election and who among the elected will run for party president. The outcome of the post-election presidential race is totally unpredictable.

Amid the uncertainty surrounding the election of LDP heavyweights to the Lower House, Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Yoichi Masuzoe, a House of Councillors member, tops the list of possible successors to Aso.

"The presidential election should be held before the special Diet session is convened," remarked former Secretary General Taku Yamasaki in a speech on August 25. "The LDP will disintegrate if we don't elect a new president before the election of a prime minister." He urged Aso to resign immediately after the election and hold the presidential election, citing Masuzoe as Aso's successor.

Since the prime minister is so unpopular, Masuzoe has been swamped with requests to campaign for LDP candidates. He himself has stated openly that "Yoichi Masuzoe will play the central role in changing Japan." He focuses his campaign efforts on the younger candidates rather than on the veterans, showing great enthusiasm to become the leader of the party's regeneration.

Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other LDP conservatives

calculate that with a liberal (as party president) the LDP will not be able to differentiate itself from the DPJ." They strongly advocate a conservative revival and actually have a plan to support the very popular Masuzoe.

However, Masuzoe is an Upper House member who has a weak political base in the party. It is uncertain whether he will be acceptable to the veterans who survive the general election.

Former Secretary General Koichi Kato indicated in a speech in his constituency on August 27 that "in the worst case the LDP may win less than 100 seats." He said, "I would like to unite the LDP Diet

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members and work hard as a leader. I will build a new LDP." His words imply an interest in running as president.

Kato believes that under the control of the largest faction, the Machimura faction, the LDP has been leaning to the right. He wants to unite the liberal forces. Former Finance Minister Sadakazu Tanigaki and former Secretary General Hidenao Nakagawa are also poised to run in the presidential election. Some party members also support a presidential run by Deputy Secretary General Nobuteru Ishihara or Agriculture Minister Shigeru Ishiba. Kunio Hatoyama, who resigned as minister of internal affairs and communications over the appointment of the president of Japan Post and who has been critical of Aso, said at a meeting in Nagoya on August 27, "I am thinking of playing the role of the savior who will resuscitate and revive the LDP after this election."

Meanwhile, the prime minister says that his goal is to win a majority of seats, but he has not mentioned taking responsibility for defeat. Most people in the LDP are cool to his candidacy. "No one will support the prime minister in the presidential election," said a former secretary general." However, there is a persistent view that Aso himself has not completely given up running.

(7) TV reporting on election reduced by half, reflecting lesson learned from too much fanfare over the Koizumi election in 2005

ASAHI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
August 26, 2009

Masahiro Yuchi, Asako Mihashi

Air time for the TV programs of the various broadcasting stations on the House of Representatives election is half of that in the 2005 election. This reflects lessons learned from covering the "assassin candidates" in the "Koizumi theater" during the last election. The TV stations are trying to put more effort into reporting the policy debate but they are in a dilemma because the debate has been uninteresting. So the political parties are turning to the Internet. The ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and New Komeito are waging a negative campaign online.

The TV stations are devoting less time to reporting on the Lower House election in their programs. According to the survey company M Data, in the week from July 21, when the Lower House was dissolved, a survey on all the news programs, talk shows, and variety shows disclosed that a total of 49 hours and 34 minutes of programming were related to the Lower House election, half of the 89 hours and 42 minutes recorded in the week after the dissolution of the Diet in 2005. The figures for Nippon TV and Fuji TV were one-third of what they were (in 2005).

A TBS official responsible for election programs looked back on the 2005 experience. "In 2005, we were not fully successful in presenting to the viewers the differences between the various policies," he said. "There is no denying that we focused on the constituencies of the 'assassin candidates.' "

For the 2007 House of Councillors election, the TV stations aired discussions of the pension issue and the question of money and politics. This time, the political parties' manifestos are in the limelight, fomenting a further transformation in TV election coverage.

However, policy debates don't easily lend themselves to (gripping) TV shows. "All the parties have a limited number of politicians appearing on TV," notes one media analyst, "so all the programs have the same people discussing the same issues. There is nothing new."

Upper House member Makoto Nishida, New Komeito public relations chief, observes that, "They (the TV stations) all strive to produce programs that examine policies, but the points of contention have not been clarified."

Rikkyo University Professor Iwao Osaka believes that "the ability to ask incisive questions on policies is inadequate, so they end up giving the impression of going through things in a rush." For this reason, they fail to attract viewers, so air time has been cut.

Chizu Okawa, assistant professor of political science at Tokyo University, says, "The relation between media and elections underwent dramatic change after Prime Minister Koizumi entered the scene. Politicians other than the prime minister have also been frequent guests on the talk shows. Politicians and the stations made mutual use of one another. However, subsequent prime ministers have not been as popular, so this (reciprocal) relationship has collapsed."

"The upcoming election is said to be an election to choose an administration. The people are very unsure about whom to choose, and there is a lot of interest in election issues. TV and media should find their niche by comparing policies. A post-election assessment of how well the issues were covered should be made."

(8) Comparison of the LDP's and DPJ's manifestos; fiscal deficit of 816 trillion yen to continue to expand

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Abridged)
August 27, 2009

The cumulative debt of the Japanese central and local governments was 600 trillion yen 10 years ago, but total debt at the end of fiscal 2009 is estimated to reach 816 trillion yen.

Japan has the largest budget deficit among industrialized countries. The figure of 816 trillion yen is 1.7 times the size of Japan's gross domestic product (GDP).

Despite the financial crisis, the government has strayed from the path of fiscal reconstruction. In June the government abandoned its goal of achieving a surplus in the primary balance by fiscal 2011. The government has also shelved efforts to cut social security costs, a measure advocated by the Koizumi administration. With an eye to the Aug. 30 House of Representatives election the government came up with economic stimulus measures on the order of a record 15.4 trillion yen. Critics accuse the government of using the economic crisis as a pretext for dispensing pork.

Tax revenues have been on the decline from a peak in 1992, but social security costs will certainly continue to soar. Against this background, the government is pondering a boost in the consumption tax. If the tax is not raised, the accumulative debt in fiscal 2023 is projected to reach 1,244 trillion yen. This estimate by the Cabinet Office bespeaks the seriousness of the nation's fiscal crisis.

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Even so, tax increases alone will not be enough to restore fiscal soundness. According to another estimate, even if the consumption tax is raised to 10 PERCENT, it will be impossible to balance the budget in the next decade. It is also necessary to drastically cut expenditures.

The bill for the growing debt will be passed on to future

generations, depriving them of the use of their tax money for their own benefit. How does each party plan to tackle this fiscal problem creating an intergenerational disparity?

The Liberal Democratic Party stresses that it will secure the fiscal resources to cover rising social security costs by boosting the consumption tax on the premise of economic recovery. The Democratic Party of Japan does not mention a consumption tax hike and emphasizes that it will eliminate wasteful spending by revising the budget.

(9) Japan's greenhouse gas emissions reduction target mere sloganeering?

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Full)
August 25, 2009

The present state of Japan's global warming prevention measures amounts to "mere sloganeering." The Kyoto Protocol stipulates the reduction of CO2 and other greenhouse gases by 5 percent from the base year 1990 from 2008-2012. There are country-specific targets to be met, and Japan is supposed to make 6 percent reductions.

However, according to the latest data released by the National Institute for Environmental Studies, an independent administrative agency, emissions in FY2007 represented a 9 percent increase from the base year, and CO2 emissions alone saw an increase of as much as 14 percent. The emissions reduction was supposed to be 13.7 percent in FY2007 if Japan is to meet its target in 2012. Even if the amount of emissions absorbed by the forests is subtracted from Japan's emission target, it will still be very difficult to meet the reduction target.

The government announced in June a mid-term target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent from the 2005 level by 2020. The target emissions volume is just a bit lower than that of the Kyoto Protocol, so this is merely an extension of the deadline to meet the Kyoto target. Europe and the developing countries and environmental groups have expressed their disappointment with the government's posture.

The reason why a higher target could not be set easily is because of the enormous cost involved in emissions reduction. The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry estimates that the 15 percent emissions reduction will require new policy measures including the popularization of solar power generation, which will cost around 60 trillion yen, and this will inevitably impact household finances.

On the other hand, if emissions reduction is not taken seriously, the earth's temperature will continue to rise and this will have a serious effect on the ecological system and climate change. How will the political parties strike a balance between the environment and household expenditures?

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While the Liberal Democratic Party stands by the government's mid-term target, the Democratic Party of Japan advocates a reduction of 25 percent from the 1990 level (or a reduction of 30 percent from the 2005 level).

(10) Interview with Sadako Ogata, president of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) - Japan must not become frustrated with reconstruction of Afghanistan and must focus on civilian assistance in which it excels

ASAHI (Page 8) (Full)
August 28, 2009

-- You have been involved in the Afghan issue for many years. What do you think of the latest Afghan presidential election? Votes are still being counted.

Ogata: There are some problems, but the fact that the Afghan people carried out the election on their own is a great accomplishment. We cannot expect a high voter turnout like the 70 percent that marked

the previous election (2004). There has been some progress evidenced, for instance, by the fact that women ran in the race. The establishment of an administration representing all people that transcends the boundaries of ethnic groups, such as the Pashtuns and Tajik, is a prerequisite for restoring civil order and assisting reconstruction.

-- The Taliban, the fundamentalist Muslim group, is gathering strength.

Ogata: The Taliban's resurgence is regrettable. The Taliban which is mostly composed of indigenous people is different from the international terrorist group, Al Qaeda, which includes many people from other countries, such as Arab nations. It was the Al Qaeda that carried out the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, and the United States attacked Afghanistan because there were their bases there. The Taliban is safeguarding people's livelihoods in some areas. The circumstances are complex.

-- There seems to be strong discontent with what has been accomplished by the Karzai administration.

Ogata: Engaged in nation-building from scratch, it has functioned in some way like a ministry responsible for the reconstruction and development of rural areas. Nevertheless, aid has not reached local regions. Achievements must be made in a way that is visible to all farmers. The centralization of power is not possible in the country, so local administrative organizations must be revamped first in order to rebuild the country. The national army, which holds a key to bringing stability to the country, has 68,000 troops, and the police force has 80,000 officers. But the country still heavily relies on the U.S.-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), for the country has no power to maintain public order independently.

-- Discontent is growing in the United States and European countries saying there is no way out.

Ogata: The U.S. military is in a dilemma because its airstrikes have claimed many civilian lives. Mr. Karzai has repeatedly lodged protests with Washington. Speaking of my experience of providing relief to refugees in the former Yugoslavia, humanitarian assistance

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must be withdrawn once airstrikes start. One way to absolutely reduce civilian casualties is to provide infantry units.

Calls for a way out probably come from fatigue from extending assistance and from a reaction to expectations on the U.S. Obama administration. In rebuilding failed states like Afghanistan, we cannot expect quick results. Rebuilding a nation requires a long period of time. Even if results are not produced in five years, that is not a failure.

It is important that the Obama administration has come up with a policy to deal with Afghanistan and Pakistan simultaneously. The Taliban is a movement that occurred in Pakistan's border area, and the Al Qaeda, too, seems to have a base there. The deteriorated relationship between the Karzai administration and Pakistan has contributed to the resurgence of the Taliban.

-- How should Japan assist (Afghanistan)?

Ogata: Japan had provided assistance for the stability and reconstruction of Afghanistan even before 9/11 and achieved results. When I visited the United States this spring, Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and other high-level officials said to me to work hard in areas in which Japan excels.

In the months ahead, the focus will be on the improvement of the growing Kabul Metropolitan Area and agricultural support for local regions. Disarmed soldiers will also return to rural areas, and unless they can make a living on agriculture, they might resort to drug cultivation.

(Interview by Takaaki Mizuno and Erika Fuji)

(11) Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, International Christian University to form academic zone

SANKEI (Page 1) (Abridged)
August 27, 2009

The Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS) and the International Christian University (ICU), which have begun collaborating from this school year, will also implement interchangeable academic credits from the next school year. These two universities are well known for their foreign language education. A university official says: "Combining the TUFS's education in 26 languages and the ICU's liberal arts education will make an ideal education system." The campuses of the two universities are also close to each other. They aim to form an "international academic zone" where the local community is closely linked with the university, like the Oxford University in the UK.

TUFS President Ikuo Kameyama proposed the collaboration scheme to ICU President Norihiko Suzuki in March 2008. Exchanges began with giving access to their libraries to the students and faculty members of both universities. They now plan to introduce interchangeable academic units for undergraduate students from School Year 2010.

While the TUFS is a national university while ICU is a private one, they have many things in common apart from excellence in language education. For example, they both have a similar number of students at around 3,000. The two campuses are only 10 minutes away by

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bicycle, so President Kameyama thought ICU would be an ideal partner. The goal is reportedly to cultivate a "regional brand" for an international university by building close links between the university and the local community.

President Kameyama says: "While both universities are well known, they are small in scale. Amid the trend of universities moving back to the city center, it is necessary to cultivate an appealing brand so that talented students will come to this place away from the city center.

(12) Pre-election poll on public trends

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
August 18, 2009

Questions & Answers

(Figures shown are percentages. Figures in parentheses are percentages in the last survey, conducted Aug. 15-16.)

Q: To what extent are you interested in the upcoming general election for the House of Representatives?

Very interested 51.6 (47.1)
Somewhat interested 38.9 (40.2)
Not very interested 7.5 (9.9)
Not interested at all 1.9 (2.9)
Don't know (D/K) + no answer (N/A) 0.1 (0.4)

Q: Which political party's candidate are you going to vote for in your single-seat constituency in the general election?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 22.6 (18.8)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 36.0 (34.1)
New Komeito (NK) 2.3 (3.0)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2.6 (2.4)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 0.9 (0.5)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.4 (0.5)
Your Party (YP or Minna no To) 1.4 (0.3)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) --- (---)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) --- (---)
Other political parties, groups 0.1 (0.4)
Independent candidate 0.8 (0.3)
None 2.6 (3.2)

Undecided 28.8 (34.2)
D/K+N/A 1.5 (2.3)

Q: Which political party are you going to vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 17.9 (16.5)
DPJ 35.9 (32.6)
NK 5.2 (4.9)
JCP 3.9 (3.8)
SDP 2.2 (1.1)
PNP 0.3 (0.9)
YP 1.0 (0.7)
RC 0.1 (---)
NPN 0.1 (0.2)
Other political parties, groups 0.1 (0.2)
None 1.1 (1.7)
Undecided 30.9 (35.1)

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D/K+N/A 1.3 (2.3)

Q: What do you regard as most important when you vote in the general election?

Social security, such as pension and healthcare 41.4 (40.5)
Economy, job security 27.3 (32.1)
Taxation, such as consumption tax 8.7 (8.2)
Decentralization, administrative reform 7.3 (6.0)
Constitutional reform 0.9 (0.6)
Foreign relations, national security 3.4 (2.5)
Politics and money 4.0 (4.0)
Political pedigree 0.9 (0.5)
Other answers 2.8 (1.9)
D/K+N/A 3.3 (3.7)

Q: Are you going to vote in the upcoming election?

Yes, for sure (including early voting) 84.0 (77.5)
Yes, if possible 14.1 (17.6)
No 1.4 (4.5)
D/K+N/A 0.5 (0.4)

Q: What form of government would you like to see after the next general election?

LDP-led coalition government 20.2 (18.2)
DPJ-led coalition government 40.9 (40.8)
LDP-DPJ grand coalition 14.3 (11.9)
New framework through political realignment 13.8 (17.3)
D/K+N/A 10.8 (11.8)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Taro Aso and DPJ President Yukio Hatoyama, who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

Taro Aso 22.7 (19.5)
Yukio Hatoyama 48.7 (48.6)
D/K+N/A 28.6 (31.9)

Q: Is there a political party you usually support?

Yes 34.3 (30.7)
No 65.2 (68.3)
D/K+N/A 0.5 (1.0)

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question)
Then, which political party do you support?

LDP 50.4 (46.9)
DPJ 30.1 (29.0)
NK 10.4 (9.9)
JCP 4.9 (8.4)
SDP 2.2 (2.3)
PNP 0.4 (1.7)
YP --- (---)
RC --- (---)

NPN 0.1 (---)
Other political parties, groups 0.2 (---)
D/K+N/A 1.3 (1.8)

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the foregoing question) If you were to support a political party, which political party would

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you like to choose?

LDP 15.9 (18.0)
DPJ 32.6 (36.6)
NK 2.4 (2.2)
JCP 2.6 (2.1)
SDP 2.1 (0.6)
PNP 0.1 (0.4)
YP 0.7 (0.7)
RC --- (0.1)
NPN 0.4 (0.1)
Other political parties, groups --- (0.2)
Still none 41.6 (37.8)
D/K+N/A 1.6 (1.2)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 23.6 (18.5)
No 66.8 (71.2)
D/K+N/A 9.6 (10.3)

Polling methodology: This survey was conducted across the nation on Aug. 26-27 by Kyodo News Service on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Among randomly generated telephone numbers, those actually for household use with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,773. Answers were obtained from 1,229 people.

(13) Sankei-FNN poll on Aso cabinet, political parties, general election

SANKEI (Page 5) (Abridged)
August 25, 2009

Questions & Answers

(Note) Figures are percentages. Figures in parentheses are percentages in the previous Sankei-FNN survey, conducted Aug. 8-9.

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 22.2 (20.5)
No 67.9 (66.6)
Don't know (D/K), etc. 9.9 (12.9)

Q: Which political party do you support?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 26.1 (22.0)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 36.0 (31.1)
New Komeito (NK) 4.9 (5.0)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2.4 (3.7)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.5 (1.5)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.4 (0.7)
Your Party (YP or Minna no To) 1.9 (---)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) 0.1 (0.0)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.1 (0.2)
Other political parties 0.8 (2.1)
None 24.4 (31.4)
D/K, etc. 1.4 (2.3)

Q: What do you regard as most important in the election for the House of Representatives?

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A change of government 18.6 (15.0)
Childcare, education 13.2 (10.7)

Social security, such as healthcare and pension 30.5 (30.8)
National security, such as North Korea problem 3.0 (2.4)
Ways and means, such as consumption tax 5.6 (6.6)
Economic policy measures 15.6 (20.1)
Administrative reform 3.6 (4.1)
Agricultural policy 2.5 (2.9)
Policy feasibility 6.5 (6.9)
D/K, etc. 0.9 (0.5)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Hatoyama, which one do you think is more trustworthy?

Prime Minister Aso 27.8 (27.9)
DPJ President Hatoyama 57.5 (54.5)
D/K, etc. 14.7 (17.6)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Hatoyama, which one do you think is more convincing?

Prime Minister Aso 28.0 (20.7)
DPJ President Hatoyama 53.0 (56.3)
D/K, etc. 19.0 (23.0)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Hatoyama, who do you think is more appropriate as prime minister?

Prime Minister Aso 22.6 (20.5)
DPJ President Hatoyama 45.5 (44.8)
D/K, etc. 31.9 (34.7)

Q: Who do you think is most appropriate now as Japan's prime minister among the following politicians in the ruling and opposition parties?

Taro Aso 4.5 (4.1)
Shigeru Ishiba 3.1 (4.5)
Nobuteru Ishihara 4.9 (5.0)
Yuriko Koike 2.4 (3.3)
Junichiro Koizumi 5.1 (7.8)
Yoichi Masuzoe 16.5 (16.9)
Kaoru Yosano 3.6 (3.1)
Other ruling party lawmakers 3.7 (0.8)
Katsuya Okada 7.9 (10.8)
Ichiro Ozawa 5.5 (3.7)
Naoto Kan 3.9 (3.1)
Yukio Hatoyama 13.3 (12.8)
Other opposition party lawmakers 4.4 (2.5)
None 17.7 (15.5)
D/K, etc. 3.5 (2.2)

Q: What do you regard as most important when voting in your electoral districts?

Candidate 35.1 (31.9)
Political party policies 44.4 (49.7)
Political party heads 4.3 (4.9)
Whether the candidate is with the ruling or opposition party 13.9 (10.8)
D/K, etc. 2.3 (2.7)

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Q: Which political party would you like to vote for in the next election for the House of Representatives in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 24.4 (25.4)
DPJ 45.8 (44.6)
NK 6.6 (5.8)
JCP 4.2 (4.4)
SDP 2.1 (2.2)
PNP 1.0 (1.8)
YP 2.8 (---)
RC 0.0 (0.0)
NPN 0.5 (0.2)
Other political parties 2.9 (3.6)

D/K, etc. 9.7 (11.6)

Q: What form of government would you like to see after the next general election?

LDP-led coalition government 18.1 (17.3)

DPJ-led coalition government 39.1 (38.4)

LDP-DPJ grand coalition 38.7 (39.4)

D/K, etc. 4.1 (4.9)

Q: Would you like to see a change of government through the election for the House of Representatives?

Yes 66.5

No 28.0

D/K, etc. 5.5

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted Aug. 20-23 by the Sankei Shimbun and Fuji News Network (FNN) over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. For the survey, a total of 1,000 persons were sampled from among men and women, aged 20 and over, across the nation.

(14) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Abridged)

August 28, 2009

Questions & Answers

(T = total; P = previous; M = male; F = female)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

T P M F

Yes 20 (17) 20 19

No 60 (67) 64 58

Not interested 18 (16) 15 20

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the above question) Why?

T P M F

Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party 39 (34) 34 42

Because the prime minister's leadership holds promise 6 (12) 5 7

Because there's something familiar about the prime minister 16 (24) 16 16

Because the prime minister's policy measures hold promise 33 (25)

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40 29

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the above question) Why?

T P M F

Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party 7 (8) 10 5

Because nothing can be expected of the prime minister's leadership 36 (39) 32 38

Because there's something imprudent about the prime minister 18 (15) 20 16

Because nothing can be expected of the prime minister's policy measures 39 (36) 37 40

Q: Which political party do you support?

T P M F

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 20 (18) 22 18

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 39 (36) 42 37

New Komeito (NK) 5 (5) 4 6

Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 4 (4) 4 3

Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1 (1) 1 1

People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0 (1) 0 0

Your Party (YP or Minna no To) 2 1 2

Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) 0 (---) --- 1

New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0 (0) 0 0

Other political parties 1 (2) 1 1
None 26 (32) 24 28

Q: Who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister, Prime Minister Aso or DPJ President Hatoyama?

T P M F
Prime Minister Aso 15 (11) 15 15
DPJ President Hatoyama 31 (28) 39 27
Neither 51 (57) 44 54

Q: Which party, the LDP or the DPJ, would you like to see win in the next election for the House of Representatives?

T P M F
LDP 25 (23) 25 25
DPJ 55 (56) 59 52
Other political parties 15 (16) 12 16

Q: Which political party's candidate are you going to vote for in your single-seat constituency?

T P M F
LDP 23 23 23
DPJ 46 50 43
NK 5 4 5
JCP 4 4 3
SDP 2 2 2
PNP 0 1 0
YP 2 2 2
RC 0 -- 0
NPN 0 0 0
Other political parties, independent 9 8 9

Q: Which political party are you going to vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

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T P M F
LDP 21 (18) 22 20
DPJ 44 (45) 48 42
NK 7 (6) 5 8
JCP 5 (4) 5 5
SDP 1 (1) 2 1
PNP 1 (0) 1 1
YP 2 2 2
RC 0 (0) -- 0
NPN 1 (0) 2 1
Other political parties, independent 7 (2) 5 9

Q: Are you going to vote in the upcoming election for the House of Representatives?

T P M F
Yes, definitely 75 77 73
Probably 18 14 20
Probably not 2 3 2
No 2 3 2

(Note) Figures are percentages, rounded off. "0" indicates that the figure was below 0.5 PERCENT. "--" denotes that none of those surveyed answered. Figures in parentheses are for the last survey, conducted July 18-19.

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted Aug. 26-27 over the telephone across the nation on a computer-aided random digit sampling (RDS) basis. A total of 1,713 households with one or more eligible voters were sampled. Answers were obtained from 1,026 persons (60 PERCENT).

(15) DPJ's proposal for system of compensating farm households' income will ruin Japan's agriculture

SHUKAN BUNSHUN (Excerpts)
August 28, 2009

Yoshihiro Asakawa, deputy editor of monthly "Agricultural Business Manager"

It is believed that Masahiko Yamada, who once served as agriculture minister of the Next Cabinet, Takashi Shinohara and Nobutaka Tsutsui are responsible for drafting the Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) agricultural policy. They will become members of a new agricultural policy clique in the Diet after a change in administration. What sort of politicians are they?

Yamada became a politician, after his beef cattle ranch incurred major losses of several hundred million yen. He, the author of a book titled "Novel - Japan-U.S. food war," is hard-liner against the U.S.

Shinohara's, a former agriculture ministry official, policy slogan is "local production for local consumption." He is basically known for his stance of being negative toward imports of any goods.

Tsutsui, the incumbent agriculture minister of the Next Cabinet, is affiliated with the former Socialist Party. Zennorin, a labor union for officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), is his power base. He openly says that what farm households

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need is not industrial policy but social security policy.

The major and worst problem about the income compensation system for farm households is that it is intended to cover losses incurred by farmers due to gaps between the cost of the cultivation of rice and the sales prices of such, that is to say, compensating deficits incurred by farmers.

Under the system, the more farmers incur losses, the more they receive money from the government. If even lazy farmers can get general compensation from the government, a sound competition principle would not work. Japan will be full of deficit-ridden farmers.

The DPJ noted that such a system should be introduced in Japan, too, because farmers' income is compensated by direct payment in the EU. However, the EU's compensation system and that of Japan are two different systems.

According to the DPJ plan, compensation is paid to cover the cost of production. The average cost of producing wheat in Japan is approximately 600,000 yen per hectare. The international price for wheat produced from 1 hectare of field is only about 60,000 yen. Under the DPJ's compensation plan, this gap - 540,000 yen per hectare will be compensated. This is extraordinarily generous treatment in comparison with the EU's compensation system, based on labor quantity.

In addition, the DPJ says that it would pay money only to farmers who grew the state-designated amounts of state-designated crops. Why does the DPJ want to have farmers grow crops that do not sell at the expenses of tax money? Behind its policy is the notion of food security. Its stance is that Japan's food self-sufficiency rate is so low that 60 percent of foods it consumes are imported from abroad. Japan would face a food shortage, unless it raises such a rate. In order to prevent the nation falling into such a situation, farm households must be protected with income compensation.

It is true that securing foods is a key issue for the state. However, the basic concept on food security is different between the world and Japan.

There are three notions regarding food security common to the international community. First, the nation should be equipped with foods that can provide minimum nutrition to the people so that they can lead healthy livelihood. Second, the nation should be able to supply foods at prices that can be afforded even by poor people. Third, the nation should be able to supply safe foods even in the event of an unexpected natural disaster.

Among industrialized countries, Japan is the only country that is discussing food security, premised on vague anxieties, such as what should be done, if a food shortage occurs in the future.

Fallacy of food self-sufficiency rate

The words "food self-sufficiency," which has been given into common parlance now, is also phony. The self-sufficiency rate is the index indicating to what extent domestically-produced foods can cover the total food supply in the nation, which MAFF has defined. It is not known that it is only Japan that adopts this index.

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The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and MAFF have stated food self-sufficiency campaign using an enormous amount of budget in order to raise this calorie-based self-sufficiency rate, which has various inconsistencies, by 1 percent.

The author has continued to point out this issue. Now even the special MAFF team says that the self-sufficiency rate is meaningless as an index. However, people are persistently calling on the government to raise the food self-sufficiency rate because it would be troublesome if a food shortage occurs. This is presumably the result of both the ruling and opposition camps setting off anxieties about a food shortage in order to secure votes of farming villages. All political parties have incorporated food security and a pledge to raise the food self-sufficiency rate in their manifestos.

The DPJ maintains that it will raise the food self-sufficiency rate by 50 percent in 10 years and eventually aim for a full self-sufficiency. This stance can be called a calorie self-sufficiency fundamentalism.

Real food security means laying down a policy of increasing independent farmers. In fact, only about 7 percent of independent farmers produce 60 percent of domestic output. These farmers are proactively making investment and pressing ahead with technical innovation and the development of commercial products.

The author wants to propose a preferential treatment system to help individual farmer achieve a surplus.

Those eligible for this scheme are farmers who want to achieve a surplus. They can grow whatever crops they want. Farmers - the producers -- are responsible for creating demand. Loans would be provided for a period of five years, for instance, to those who have submitted a management plan. If they post earning, they would be exempt from the payment of all loans they received as well as the payment of interest. In the meantime, farmers who suffered losses would have to pay loans they received.

Farmers should compile a profit-earning program and aim to produce surplus, while making efforts to achieve their goals. If such a very ordinary way of doing business takes roots, the number of farmers who can engaging in farming in a sustainable way will increase.

ROOS